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HARRY

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ac.

BY

THE AUTHOR

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DEDICATED TO

MENELLA SMEDLEY,

AS A TINY TOKEN

OF

BOUNDLESS LOVE AND ADMIRATION.

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HARRY

PART I.

Love caught his heart in a lovely surprise,
Just the first moment he looked in my eyes:
Poor little eyes! by no prescience lit,
They saw him three weeks ere I lov'd him one bit.

Fair is the book* where we read of a life
Born to a throne, taking love for its bliss,
Self-reproach wounding the sweet royal wife
For keeping two years he had asked for as his.

* See 'Life of Prince Consort,' vol. i.

So *I* might suffer a sort of remorse,
Thinking of days that I cared not, yet knew;
Only, he says, ''Tis a matter of course
Girls should be woo'd and their lovers should woo.'

Only, the blossom he stoops not to touch,
Sparkling with beauty that lies at his feet;
Only, the blossom he coveteth much,
Is one that shineth as distant as sweet.

Only, a bird may fly helplessly near,
Chirping aloud in a manner too free;
Only, the bird he delighteth to hear,
Sings from the far-away top of a tree.

Is it for this he first fancied me, then?
He to whom earth her allegiance brings,
Noblest of nobles, a king among men,
Hero of heroes! a god among kings!

'Twill be very nice to be very old,
And with wrinkled brows and eyes that are dim,
To sit by the fire and in dreams behold
The face of the child that was woo'd by him.

Eve in her Eden, belov'd and preferr'd,
Sun, moon, and stars for her benefit made,
Bright as a blossom and gay as a bird,
Earth at her feet like a pleasure-ground laid;

All things about her benignant and fair—
Was she of Adam an actual part?
Love shining over her everywhere—
Had he no trouble in winning her heart?

Born with a mind even Kant must admit
Had no antecedents for doubt or regret,
Only white paper where nothing is writ,
Was she his wife the first moment they met?
Did she no gradual wooing receive?
Was she never a girl?—I am sorry for Eve!

Or if like others her history sped,
In those lovely regions to mortals unknown;
Flirting and courting and woo'd ere she wed,
Was the bird of her paradise Eve's chaperone?

I wonder if Adam my fancy would strike
As something like Harry!—What *is* Harry like?
Handsome and tall, with command in his eye,
The sweetest of smiles giving sternness the lie;
His soldierly bearing keeps foemen at bay;
His hair is clipped close in the orthodox way;
His nose has a curve from the bridge to the tip:
A statue might envy his short upper lip.
He dances divinely, and walks with an air
Half autocratic and half debonair,
With something about him no words can define:
Eve, was your hero as handsome as mine?

And oh! the years that pass'd over my head
When I was leisurely growing or grown;
And oh! the minutes that suddenly led
To the sweetest thought that ever was known.

Only one glad little glance that I gave,
Where by the window the passion-flower grew,
And a strong man was turn'd into a slave,
Watching and waiting for all that I do.

And a strong man's heart beat only for me—
Only for me while it answers life's call;
Till *I* was compell'd to hear and to see;
And only one little look did it all!

Oh, such an infinitesimal thing!
One unthought-of minute hurrying by,
And the whole of two lives yet in their spring
Are utterly chang'd for ever and aye!

If with idle heart and with careless eyes
I had not happened just there and just then
To smile at a flower beneath the skies,
Should I never have lov'd the first of men?

Had he seen me first in a festal hour,
Or riding, or driving, or by the sea,
And not with a smile for the passion-flower,
Would he never, never have cared for me?

Who planted the root, and its climbing plann'd?
Who water'd below or cherish'd above?
Is it the work of a gardener's hand
That causes my Harry and me to love?

Had that gardener never been born or hir'd,
Or done this one insignificant thing;
Had the passion-flower died;—my heart is tir'd
With the troublesome sudden thoughts that spring;
And mine eyes are filling with foolish tears,
And the pang that I feel is sharp and keen,
As I see the empty unhappy years,
And I think of all that might *not* have been.

Treason to love, that such thoughts should arise!
In Heaven I *know* our marriage was made;
Heaven *is* somewhere beyond those blue skies,
Why am I weeping and feeling afraid?

Happy the angels, who tenderly plan
These beautiful compacts to glorify man!
Happy the man and the woman who take
Humbly their crown for the dear angels' sake!

Love in our hearts giving strength to endure,
Eternal itself, makes eternity sure;
Earth growing perfect, unspeakably dear,
Only makes heaven seem yet more near.

Why do I tremble in fanciful doubt?
All things—or nothing—had brought it about;
Whatever might happen, *I must* be his;
What signifies *talking*, since *so it is?*

So there came the last of the careless days:
Did time in the very-same manner move?
(My heart almost stops in a mute amaze
To think that it ever was *not* in love.)

Up in the morning, as gay as a lark,
With a glad good-bye to the pleasant night;
Without an idea I am in the dark,
Or that just beyond is the real light;

Running down stairs, with a laugh as I ran,
Free as 'the blossom that hangs on the bough'—
I never had given a thought to a man,
And why in the world should I give one now.

Dancing along through the hawthorn-crown'd lane,
'Neath showers of flowers whose name I bear,
Was it not strange I should find Harry Vane
Coming to meet me just then and just there?

Is it for this our two lives have been led,
Each travelling on its different way,
To meet with the blue sky over our head
Shaded by delicate blossoms of may?

Little reck'd I whom I happened to meet,
That I had a lover I never guess'd,
As I danc'd along with my careless feet,
And the heart of a child within my breast

I had seen him a dozen times before,
With a pleasure that brought no sudden change;
I knew that he lik'd me—but nothing more:
O Harry! to think of it *is* so strange!

Sauntering on with the birds and the flowers,
Talking of things that we know or we knew—
Of the pretty wishes that once were ours
In long-ago times when our years were few:

A wild little bird skims rapidly by;
And I tell of a day when my heart was stirr'd,
And I cried as only a child can cry,
That I was a girl instead of a bird.

'And oh!' in an eager manner I cried,
'I am feeling the very same wish to-day:
Oh for two wild wings, and to spread them wide,
And rush through the sky away and away.'

I cast up my eyes, to the smiling skies,
And smiling I lower'd their glance again,
And as they were lower'd they met his eyes,
And a thrill went through me of sweetest pain.

I blush'd when I thought of my eager words—
But why do I blush? and why do I care?
What does it matter to me and the birds,
Or the pretty blossoms or scented air?

'And I,' he replied, 'have my wishes too:
Time teaches the real meaning of things;
And only this moment, looking at you,
I felt that an angel need *not* have wings.'

We had sauntered on to the garden gate:
He look'd in my eyes ere we turn'd to part:
I walk'd away in a manner sedate,
And with something new just touching my heart.

When the first violet open'd in bloom,
Was it surpris'd at its lovely perfume?
Why does not History tell us, who met
First, the sweet breath of the first violet?
Rather I'd know it than facts that are known—
As when some tyrant ascended some throne,
A battle was fought, a comet display'd,
Coals were discover'd, or steam-engines made.

I can no moment recall, ere I knew
Perfume pertain'd to those blossoms of blue;
Had the first knowledge of sweetness like this
Touch'd me to-day, what perfection of bliss!
Children with all that creation can grant
Scarcely will miss the one pleasure I want,
Just to *remember* the day and the hour
When, by spring breezes caressingly blown,
Delicate fragrance of violet flower
First touch'd my senses, becoming my own!

And what can it be—oh, what can it be,
That has garnish'd earth with a golden grace?
What is this something that entering me
Changes my life in a minute of space?

When I first notic'd the power in his eyes—
Watching to see if they praise or condemn,
Blushing to meet them—came into the skies
Beauty that never has vanish'd from them.

When I first stopp'd in the midst of my mirth,
While my heart beat in a tremulous way
Only to see him,—came over the earth,
Glory that earth has retain'd to this day.

When the first whisper assaulted my ear,
When the first pressure astonish'd my hand,
When I first fancied that *I* might be dear—
Life was a miracle joyous and grand.

When he first woo'd me with prayers, for his own,
Suddenly came an eclipse of the light:
Sighing, I wish'd he would let me alone;
Smiling, I long'd to hide out of his sight.

Life being lit by a fairy-like gleam,
Sparkling and glittering, tender and pure,
Was not he stupid to change such a dream
Into reality tame and secure?

'Tis sweet to find I am wrong in the thoug
Joy is but brighter for being confess'd;
Every moment has happiness brought,
Every stage of true love is the best.

They wish me at home to sit and to sew—
And I like to do what my aunt thinks right—
But the stitching never seem'd half so slow,
Nor zigzagg'd itself as it did one night.

And my work kept slipping out of my hand
As wonderful thoughts came into my head:
Sure, life is becoming too bright and grand
To be given up to needles and thread!

I was thinking of words that Harry spake,
And of looks that more than mere words betray.
With a joy as pure as the first snow-flake,
And almost as ready to melt away.

And with little tears beginning to start,
And with smiles and blushes that come and go;
And I did not know what was in my heart,
Or else I pretended I did not know!

O sudden awaking from dream so fair!
'Tis the voice of my aunt, and I hear it say—
'Child, are you falling asleep in your chair?
Will you *ever* finish that collar, May?'

I caught up my work (I knew I was wrong),
Determin'd to finish it ere we sup;
But something within me, for me too strong,
Conquer'd myself, and I *had* to give up.

'O, my Aunt Bridget,' I timidly said,
'I am *tired* of stitching—I *want* to rest;
O let me gather the roses instead,
The young little roses the first and best.'

Soft summer twilights caressing the air
Have buried the garden in lovely gloom;
But I knew that the eagerest roses there
Were just beginning to think they might bloom.

The pretty wee stars kept peeping about,
And even peep'd in through our prison bars,
As she gravely said, 'Who ever went out
To gather a rose by the light of stars?'

My heart beat fast at the beautiful phrase;
She had not intended it, I suppose,
But I felt I could love her all my days,
If under the stars I might pluck one rose!

Pleading my cause in so ardent a way,
Almost evoking an answering glow,
Crying, 'You once were as young and as gay'—
Then, she smil'd a little and let me go.

'Twas pleasure enough to be out of doors;
I look'd at the stars and I felt content:
But it never rains, you know, but it pours,
And the path that I *had* to go—I went!

Playing with fancies, in fanciful play,
'If I want a rose,' I demurely said,
'I must look for an omen to point the way,
And I must look for it over my head.'

So I found a star that shone in the sky,
And mark'd how it glitter'd down on a tree,
And felt—but I swear that I know not why—
There grow the roses intended for me!

And as I approach the shadowy boughs
That are spreading out over earth and air,
A gay little miracle fate allows,
And the star appears to be sparkling there!

Gladly I ran o'er the daisy-clad plain,
Led by the shimmering light of the star,
And under the tree I found—Harry Vane
Lying, and smoking a 'mild cigar!'

I started astonish'd—he stood upright,
And said, in a voice persuasively kind,
'Don't you *know* that I come here every night,
To see your shadow flit by on the blind?'

I look'd where he pointed, as if 'twas I
Could see my own phantom flicker and pass,—
And *Aunt Bridget's* shadow mov'd solemnly by,
Over the canvas that hangs by the glass!

Oh, how could we help it?—we laugh'd aloud
(Birds never cease their sweet voices in spring;
And I think in youth little laughters crowd
And spring to our lips at everything!)

In laughter we lost all sense of surprise;
It seem'd only natural we should meet;
And a star shot flaming across the skies,
And a little glow-worm gleam'd at my feet.

And a distant bell swung its solemn chime,
That seem'd to me like the voice of a star;
And I think, through a century of time,
I shall always believe that such things are.

And then—it was then—he spoke, and I heard;
And the moon rose up, and the stars grew dim,
And all of a sudden the nightingale-bird
Triumphantly chanted her jubilant hymn.

What are you singing about, little birds,
Twittering loudly in lime-tree and oak?
Telling each other the wonderful words
On a sweet May evening a lover spoke?

Butterflies, floating away from the trees,
With blossom-like wings of delicate dye,
You are bearing tidings certain to please
Scatter them freely, but do not ask why.

Two lovers stood 'neath a star-lighted sky,
Half fearfully touching enchanted ground:
One lover was Harry, and one was I,
And the world went merrily round and round.

Souls rushing together from distant parts,
Vows utter'd that cannot be ever undone;
A minute ago two lives and two hearts,
Through time and eternity now but one.

O foolish butterflies! chattering birds!
Instinct in vain with humanity strives;
You can't understand the wonderful words
Or magical kisses that changed two lives!

What is Nature made for? is it for us
The beautiful world is burnish'd and blent?
If we had not eyes, would blossoms shine thus?
If we had not nostrils, would they have scent?

I heard a philosopher say—in isles
Surrounded by ocean, apart, alone,
With no living creature to reckon miles,
Wherein life had never been born or known,

That the clouds with electric flash may meet,
And thunder may rattle its dreadful breath,
Yet never a sound break the rest complete,
Or the silence of this eternal death;

That the fierce storm-wind may bluster and blow,
Tearing the trees from the root-broken ground,
Or the wild sea-surf may leap and may flow
In solemn silence with never a sound.

For sound is but the vibrations of air
That strike on the drum of the living ear;
So if never a living ear is there,
There is nothing to strike and nothing to hear.

Though the vibrations move on, and live,
And thus the law of their being obey,
'Tis the ear produces the sound they give—
That's what I heard a philosopher say.

So if thunder, roll'd through quivering air,
With that awful silence reigning around,
And you or I suddenly landed there,
All Nature would break at once into sound.

It seems very strange and eerie, you know;
I don't understand how it is—do you?
But a philosopher said it, so
I really suppose that it must be true.

And is not there something in human hearts
(Mountains, you know, must spring out of the flat)
That at Love's light touch into music starts?
Ah, what would philosophers say to *that*?

There never was summer so bright as this,
And the world will always be burnished thus;
For if Love the magical painter is,
He for ever will paint the same for us.

'Tis a light within that illumes the land;
And free as the birds from sorrow or strife,
Very close together, and hand in hand,
We shall walk on through unlimited life.

'Ah, Harry!' I cried, 'I shall lean on *you*!
'Tis the purest joy to look up so high;
You will teach me all that I ought to do;
On your noble strength can my steps rely.

I hope that you know I am very weak,
Only a poor little thing at the best;
But children can love before they can speak,
And I hope that love will make up the rest.'

Oh beautiful pathway, untouched by care;
Oh you scattered roses on which we tread;
You lead to a church with its holy prayer,
And its Heaven-blessing over us shed!

Nightingales singing an exquisite tune
All the sweet music for me and for you,
Saying my prayers by the light of the moon,
Happy the prayers that are utter'd for two!

Stars in the depth of a fathomless space,
Summer-blue sky by no shadow o'ercast,
Joy pointing on to a far-away grace
Brighter than e'en the beneficent past;

Trouble to measureless distances fled,
Death too remote to be worthy a sigh—
Can there be any one sorry or dead?
Sorrow or death 'neath a summer-blue sky!

Was there a moment we never had met?
Was there a time unexalted by him?
Shone the same lustre in suns when they set?
Sparkled the river with joy to the brim?

Glitter'd the blue over heaven and sea?
Flutter'd the birds to a musical call?
Could he be happy unconscious of me?
And, without Harry, what was I at all?

I stand on a rock where two rivers meet,
With a life behind and a life before;
And one is ebbing away from my feet,
And the other is rising more and more.

Ah, poor little maiden! ah, dear little wife!
Ah, days that are past and days that will come!
The past is nothing—this only is life;
I am going with *him* and am going HOME.

And such a sweet pretty home as it is!
What shall I do with my exquisite bliss?
How can I ever be charming enough,
Where rumpling a roseleaf will make the path rough?
How can I thank the great Father above
For showing His child such abundance of love?
With Harry a home in a hovel were sweet,
And this is a palace that lies at my feet.

I look at the gardens spread out in the sun,
Where every rosebud a prize might have won;
Where lilies lift up tinted crowns to the skies,
And clematis strike you aghast by their size;
Where lawns smooth as ice tempt your feet as they pass,
Though only a fairy should tread on such grass;
And big forest trees on the slopes, spread afar
Those branches that grander than anything are.

I sweep through the rooms where the mirrors portray
A slender young thing in a robe of pale gray,
And catching quick glimpses, now here and now there,
I own with delight she is graceful and fair;
I study the creature, and smile as I see
How handsome a woman one day she may be;
I draw myself up with a stately expanse
And try to look grand, while I'm longing to dance;
I flourish, I curtsey, I slip and I slide;—
This will do for a wife, this is fit for a bride.
I smile and I bow, in a dignified way,
And even shake hands with the lady in gray;
Then draw back astonish'd, afraid to offend,
It is all a mistake, and she is not a friend.
In a moment sweeps over the vision a change
Deliciously sweet and suddenly strange,
A blush in the cheek and a light in the eyes;—
A step in the passage, to meet it she flies,
And still in the mirror I mark the embrace,
Where the strong manly arms hide the small blushing face.

When the sun rises early to call people out,
There is nothing so sweet as to wander about,
A hand on an arm or an arm round a waist,
In lover-like leisure or holiday haste.
Then, all is delightful we see or we hear,
And speaking or silence are equally dear;
The earth at our feet of an emerald hue,
The Heaven above us incredibly blue,
The flowers baptiz'd with miraculous dew.

While yet the sky blushes to welcome the sun,
Through the gay gardens we stroll and we run;
In fields where lambs gambol less happy than we,
Glittering grass makes a sheen like the sea;
Birds unexpectedly set up a chant,
Adding a joy that the world seem'd to want.

Creation is made for our pleasure alone:
Adam and Eve, with no sin to atone,
Knowledge untasted, less rapture have known!

Keeping by Harry, a friend who is fond
Follows as closely as follow he can:
Is there an earthly affection beyond
The love a good dog feels for a good man?

If twenty people fling down twenty gloves
Our Rover has never been known to fail;
He picks out the glove of the man he loves,
And brings it triumphantly, wagging his tail.

Rover and I, under shadowy yew,
List'ning for Harry's dear step on the path—
He *always* hears it the first of the two,
Which gives me a feeling half joy, half wrath.

By divers states can our spirits be mov'd
Our hearts will answer to many a touch;
We love one creature for being much lov'd,
And we love another for loving much.

By delicate touches our souls are stirr'd,
Fraught with a meaning life never reveals:
I wonder the Bible says not a word
Of the faithful love that a good dog feels

Good are the mornings for birds in a nest,
Fluttering out from a beautiful home;
Good are the mornings, but evenings are best,
Seeking its shelter nor asking to roam.

Life, like a secret, is too much for one—
May be too little where numbers are great—
All *may* be vanity under the sun,
But all *is* charming when done *tête a tête.*

Neighbours *will* call—what a trouble it is!
Dinners and parties are made for our sake:
Why must society trouble our bliss?
Dinners and neighbours are quite a mistake!

Drest as a bride, I must dine at the Grange;
Harry beside me, I have not a care;
Only it seems so exceedingly strange
Not to be thinking of meeting him there!

Jane does my hair with a skill, I confess,
Smilingly thinking of days that are gone,
When for a party I ran up to dress
With neither a husband nor maid of my own.

Life that is past, did you certainly pass?
When were you actual? how did you change?
Who is this girl that I see in the glass
Thinking of things that are happy and strange?

Who is this man who may enter the room,
Placidly certain his presence must please,
Settle her colours, select her perfume,
Hands in his pockets serenely at ease:

Who can the girl be, and who is the man?
Light-hearted creatures who live but to love!
'Tis the result of the Angels' kind plan,
One of the marriages made up above!

Hand laid in hand to the stairs we advance,
Feet scarcely touching the carpet at all:
Why should they walk who are able to dance?
Clasping each other, we waltz through the hall!

Pleasant the drive in the twilight's soft gloom;
Dazzling the change to society's light;
Proud of my Harry I enter the room,
Every eye on my gallant young knight.

Lovely the welcome around me I see—
Will it be thus through a beautiful life?
Everybody attentive to me,
And only because I am Harry's wife?

Dear to my heart are the glitter and grace;
But nothing so charming, or bright, is here
As the gracious smile upon Harry's face,
Or his manly voice as it greets my ear.

As from the banquet the ladies depart
I hear two gentlemen murmuring low—
'The Captain has got an excellent start
But he won't set the Thames on fire, you know!"

Then I look back and attempt to decide
Who is this Captain who must not aspire;
I meet Harry's eyes, and I smile with pride,
For I know *he* could set the Thames on fire!

Afterwards music; he sings and I sing,
She sings and they sing, and minutes flit past:—
Harmony certainly quickens Time's wing,
And the lark sings loudest when flying fast.

His Song.

Must he toil beneath the sun
Who has nothing else to do?
What's the use of such a one?
I know not—pray do you?
Skies are not aflame for him;
He converses not with elves;
Primroses on river's brim
Can be nothing but themselves.

Need he interfere with me,
Who care only to be blest?
Go thy way, unhappy bee,
Leave a butterfly at rest.
Butterflies with painted wings
Are a part of Nature's plan;
Is not every bird that sings,
Wiser than a busy man?

Harry's rich tenor delighteth my ears
Oft as I hear it; 'tis ever the same;
Brings to my eyes a soft *soupçon* of tears,
Sends from my heart little thrills through my frame.

My Song.

When the sea
Speaks to me,
Sure I may reply to it;
When the skies
Catch my eyes,
I must smile a little bit.
When the trees
Try to please,
With their buds and blossoms new,
Shall I dare
Not to care
For a world so bright and true?

Earth and sky,
Tell me why
Sorrow ever comes between?
Is it you,
Heaven blue?
Is it you, my earth so green?
Is it there
In the air
That you neither of you touch?
Is the wind
So unkind
When I love its kiss so much?

Let it be
Earth or sea,
Skies or breezes as they move,
Earth is sweet
'Neath my feet,
Heaven sweeter yet above;

And the air
Ev'rywhere
Is the sweetest of the three;
I will take,
For their sake,
Anything they bring to me!

Men flocking round me, I find I'm admir'd;
Praise is as sweet as a gratified whim;
When a girl pleases she never feels tir'd—
Harry smiles at me, and I smile at him.
Through the open doors of a crystal dome
Sweet is the scent of the tropical flowers,
The splendid exiles who, banish'd from home,
Are sparkling and shining to gladden ours.
Figures appearing 'mid blossom and fruit,
In an airy, fairy, magical way;
Their lips keep moving altho' they are mute
For ears too distant to hear what they say.

From a lily bud can a voice be sent?—
'Let us hope the Captain's wild oats are sown;
A pretty young wife should make him content'—
Only a word in a soft-spoken tone!

Moving serenely 'mid beauty and song,
Am not I born for the glittering throng?
Treading on roses with delicate feet,
Is not a life a perpetual treat?
Can we be more than delighted and blest?
Pleasure is beautiful—is it the best?
Highest and best that our nature can know?
Answer my heart—and my heart answers No.
And my heart answers, 'more beautiful yet
Life is for those who leave *Home* with regret,
And greet it again as the sailor greets shore,
Gaily returning to life gone before.'

Thus from the banquet two lovers depart,
Owning thy truth, lovely voice of my heart;

Seeking a home that, whatever befall,
Is brighter and sweeter and dearer than all;
Better than all that the world can decree,
For happy young creatures like Harry and me!

Self-ordained critics, we sit at our ease,
Life spread before us to judge as we please;
Harry in quite a ridiculous way
Prates about wine, like a swell in a play;
Next, the made dishes proceeding to scan,
With wisdom becoming a greedy old man;
Looking so charmingly youthful and gay,
I laugh in his face at his airs of *gourmet;*
Admitting myself but three things to be nice—
Champagne, lobster salad, and strawberry ice.

Then pass the people in sparkling review;
I ask fifty questions beginning with Who?

Midnight approaches—a sense of repose
Floating about me, my eyelids half close;
Rising, I languidly say, 'By the bye,
Who is the Captain?' he laughs in reply,
Stands up in front of me, just face to face,
Makes me a bow with an air and a grace:
'The Captain this moment before you' you see—
That's my nickname in the country,' says he.
Pleasantly sleepy I felt ere he spake,
Now I am thoroughly widely awake;
A shock passes through me of horrid surprise,
I turn upon Harry my wondering eyes,
Catching at hopes, as the drowning at straws,
I cry, as the truth for a moment withdraws,
'You're quizzing me, Harry—that's what you're at,
It *cannot* be *you* that they speak of like that!'
Then he insists on my telling, displeas'd
At any concealment, WHAT have I heard?
Worried and wearied, bewilder'd and teaz'd,
I blurt it out and repeat every word!

Harry regards me with almost a stare—
Pulls his moustache with a sort of amaze—
Passes his hand through his clustering hair
And—bursts out laughing, as if it was praise!
There is nothing so sweet or full of grace
(Can one who has seen it ever forget?)
As the smile that comes over Harry's face;
It is Heaven on earth—and yet—and yet—
I feel a strange chill steal into my heart—
Should he permit such remarks from the crowd?
Can it be their part? Can it be his part?
They the mean snobs! he the noble and proud!

No shooting to-day of partridge or snipe;
It has steadily rained since morning broke,
In dancing spirits I kindle his pipe
(I am learning to like the smell of smoke!)

He has given up such a deal for me!
He likes to give up his bachelor way;
He says it is charming *not* to be free,
So he only smokes one pipe in the day.

Together we sit in his little room,
Which is fitted up like a dainty toy;
And if without there is darkness and gloom,
Within there is plenty of light and joy.

'Tell me of all you have done, if you can,'
I cry, as the pretty smoke lightly curls;
'I want to hear of the life of a man
I, who only know of the life of girls!'

He shakes his head with a smile and a nod,
The smoke curling round it with idle aim;
He is like the picture of some young god,
Who, from painted clouds, looks out of a frame.

'The life of a girl is a fairy thing,
With a sweetness none can wish to forget,
Caught from a snowdrop in earliest spring
Or the first faint breath of a violet;
The life of a man, as it is and was,
Is like autumn leaves decaying and dead,
With a flavour of bad theatrical gas,
And of last night's banquet,' my husband said.

I laugh'd at the gay nonsensical speech,
In my merry pride at being his wife;
I sat at his feet, and I bade him teach
A neophyte out of his noble life.

He mutter'd 'My noble life!' with a frown,
'With noble lives I have little to do;
My dear, put those frivolous notions down,
I am but a man, and a weak one too.
My life has been full of confounded things,
I am only a man, like other men;
But we hear a flutter of angel-wings,
And our demons forsake us, there and then.
In marrying *thee*, my innocent sprite,
I had caught a glimpse of a purer joy;
I turn'd a new page, and the page was white;
I'm quite determin'd to be a good boy!'
His hand sought my head with a careless grace,
And the sun shone suddenly out on us;
O gracious and sweet was my Harry's face,—
Why should a hero belie himself thus?

PART II.

When turf is level how rapid the pace!
Linger ye moments!—be patient my life!
Marriage is only an idyl of grace,
What knows a bride of the bliss of a wife?

Are all things the dearer for growing old?
As flowers *are* sweeter deep in a wood;
Will the warmth of May in July seem cold?
Was earth less perfect when God call'd it 'good'?

Even roses when young are only green,
And the exquisite perfume faint and small,
If roses are lovely when just half seen,
When blown they are sweetest and best of all.

Time passes on, and they open *too* much;
Still the rich fragrance about them is shed;
Delicate petals fall off with a touch;
Happy and mourn'd for, the roses are dead!

And when *we* die (if death ever can be,
Life leaping in me, it sounds like a jest),
May it be thus with my Harry and me—
Love's latest perfume its sweetest and best.

He, whom I speak to, smiles into my face,
Crying, with kisses, that life would restore,
'All that you say has a feminine grace;
But *has'nt* Moore said something like it before?'

From the piano I draw forth a peal,
Greeting the sound with a smile and a sigh,
Singing 'The Last Rose of Summer,' I feel
That summer and roses can *never* die!

'Twas a beautiful evening, fresh and fair;
Earth sweeter far than impossible skies;
My heart beating light as a bird in air,
When Harry brought home with him Jack Devize.

Did no presentiment touch me that day?
Never a *soupçon* of evil or ill?
No, the world was bright with Harry away,
And when Harry came back it was brighter still.

The man stood there, and his shadow was laid
Straight at my feet by the sunset decrees;
I mark'd it well, and I was not afraid;
And when Harry nam'd him I smil'd with ease.

The roses poured out their exquisite scent,
Birds gave us the sweetest music they had,
And the little grasses daintily bent
In the tender breeze, as if they were glad.

Are there not angels to guard us and keep?
Are spirits *not* round us hidden from sight?
Oh! angels and spirits were all asleep,
Or they must have warn'd me that fatal night.

I have wak'd with the thought of an absent friend
(And others I know who have done the same),
And have felt 'ere I see the daylight's end,
Her letter must come—and her letter came.
I have run indoors with the happy thought
That something pleasant was going to be,
And—coincidence strange!—my eye has caught
The sight of the thing it desired to see.

I have felt a depression all the day,
A dullness for which I could not account,
And a flower has died—a dog run away—
Or a horse gone lame that I wish'd to mount.

And if from the regions of mysteries
Something can warn us of trifles like these;
How could it be I met Mr. Devize
With a smiling face and a heart at ease?

No dream at night, when by wonderful laws
The bodies are dead, the spirits alive;
No little heart—sinking without a cause
When the perfect sunshine made nature thrive;
No omen or signal, little or great,
Not a quicken'd pulse or a flutter'd breath;—
So Harry and I rush'd on to our fate,
And the unseen world was passive, as Death.

We stroll'd through the gardens till dinner came,
The scented breezes were faultlessly sweet;
The sun went suddenly down in a flame,
While the birds their jubilant hymns repeat,
We chatted at dinner, and afterwards,
And the moments pleasantly slid away,
But when Mr. Devize suggested cards,
I laughingly told him I could not play.

The cards are produced; the men begin;
I sit by Harry and watch his hand;
I am very eager that he should win,
And when he does so, I feel very grand.

'Twas all very well for once you see;
Its novelty made it a thing to praise;
It was quite a joke for a girl like me,
Living with men and observing their ways.

But when Jack had dined again and again,
And with others enjoy'd the cards and fare,
With a little shiver that felt like pain,
I would say 'good night' and leave Harry there.

Cool is the chamber and pleasant the light,
Tranquil and innocent, tender and calm;
Sweet are the thoughts that approach us at night,
Sweet as the breeze with its perfumy balm.
And if I am reading the happy Word,
Or saying my prayers by the taper's glow,
I wish that my Harry had *this* preferr'd
To the painted toys and the men below.

'I wish that my Harry had this preferr'd'-
But ought I to wish it, if he does not?
Has my foolish heart from its duty err'd,
And the soft compliance of love forgot?

There *can* be no question 'twixt wrong and right;
And surely we all can be brave and strong;
Yet I seem a little perplex'd to-night,
And hardly to know what *is* right or wrong.

I'm very young to be anyone's wife,
And to know about serious things like these—
Must my little hand touch my husband's life
With a thought of something *more* than to please?

What shall I do with this ghost of a care
That makes my silly heart flutter and sink?
I will first kneel down and will say a prayer,
And then I'll ask Harry what I should think!

Harry stalk'd into my room in a rage—
'Hilton and Wilton have clear'd me out quite;
A run of ill luck at every stage—
Fifty pounds lost since you left us to-night!
I'll have my revenge on the rogues I vow!'
Marks of strange anger disfigure his face,
A dry parch'd lip and a thundery brow,
And a sharp bright eye that has lost its grace.

So a lov'd little hand comes smoothing down—
Wandering kisses can anger eclipse;
The beautiful forehead has ceased to frown,
And sweet is the kiss I find on my lips.

'Ah, dearest,' I whisper, 'mourn not for this,
On a summer day with a heap of flowers;
This cannot be sorrow, or if it is,
It is a sorrow that cannot be ours.'

All the strange passion had vanish'd, I ween;
The Harry I knew had come back again;
And on his sweet face I had never seen
A sweeter smile than illumin'd it then.

With smiles he caress'd me: 'you little thing—.
You dear little thing,' he tenderly said;
'We have banish'd you by the cards we bring;
Let us banish cards and have you instead.'

I clapp'd my hands, and my heart beat light,
As I softly whisper'd, 'Indeed you may,
For I'm certain, Harry, it is not RIGHT
To spend so much money and time at play.'

He gave me an odd little look askance,
And mutter'd, 'A man must do something though;'

I answer'd the look with a loving glance,
'But the something need not be cards, you know;
There is plenty to do before we die,
That may suit a gay and a careless mood;
We are *so* happy, Harry, you and I,
That I think we ought to be ever so good.
Playing at cards for money, I'm clear,
Is an alien thing in beautiful lives'—
He grumbled, 'The fellows will think me queer;
But then the poor fellows have *not* got wives.'
We talk'd the matter delightfully out;
Our words were earnest and bright and free;
We twisted it round, we turn'd it about,
And we both agreed that it should not be.

'You are my angel,' he cried, with a kiss;
'I fear lest your wings are spreading to fly
And his angel I *ought* to be, in this,
For 'tis he who is tempted, and not I.

O, women have no temptations at all;
They have only to keep their white lives white;
But men are so tempted, that men must fall—
O wonderful Harry who stands upright!

Again the sweet evenings we had at first:
He reads, and I work; or we play and sing;
And looks and words that, if life were accurs'd,
In memory only, would rapture bring.
Engagements of course will sometimes arise;
But the joy is still in the coming back;
And sometimes he dines with us (Jack Devize),
And sometimes my husband dines out with Jack.

Under the cliff with its towering crest,
Where the wandering sea has fill'd the space,
A sweet little village has made its nest,
A sort of miniature watering place.

Scarcely a mile by the upper cliff way—
Further of course by the beach-shaded road—
Little Bellhaven contentedly lay,
Easily reached from our pleasant abode.

Therein a Church, and a place of Dissent,
A shop where we purchase our sugar and shoes,
Therein a Library ladies frequent;
Therein a club where the men read the news;
Also a chamber where, lit from above,
Balls white and crimson disport on green baize,
That capital game which gentlemen love,
Where Harry conquers whenever he plays.
Billiards require grace, agility, skill;
No one without them can hope to excel;
But Harry never did anything ill
That it is manly and right to do well.

In my pretty turn-out with ponies gray,
At a rattling pace to the club I come,
And feel like a queen triumphantly gay,
As I drive my conquering Hero home.

I like him to play; I like him to win;
I like to wait by the Ocean expanse,
To watch its wild waves come careering in,
In regular order unknown to chance.

I like the scent of the weeds that they bear,
And their rolling sound on the pebbly beach;
I like the touch of the salt-flavour'd air;
There is beauty, pleasure, and health in each.

A little hotel in Bellhaven stands,
Where dinners are serv'd remarkably well,
And sometimes Harry slips out of my hands
And dines with Jack at this little hotel.
I'm not very fond of the place, I own;
Ought I to mind it, if Harry's amused?
But I feel so lonely when I'm alone,
And sometimes I feel a little ill-used.

'Tis seldom my husband deserts me thus,
He is always home ere the clock strikes ten;
So I won't be foolish and make a fuss,
But try to remember that men are men.

Sitting and waiting for Harry alone,
Watching the minutes, and wanting him back—
Why are you absent, my Harry, my own?
Am not I nicer than billiards and Jack?

Traitress to ask such a question! for shame!
Thou art, thou knowest, beginning and end!
His whole life is thine—he is *not* to blame!
May not thy husband go out with a friend?

Thou art the false one, and he is the true—
Fretful and idle, unworthy thy king!
Hast thou not anything useful to do,
Thou good-for-nothing and cross little thing?

Scolding myself, I spring up from my chair,
Calling out loud that the time is *not* long;
March down the room with a resolute air,
Seize my guitar, and burst out into song!

Poor little girl, sitting singing alone,
Pretty guitar round a slender neck hung,
Smiles on thy lips, but a sad little moan,
Deep in a heart that is foolish and young.

Song.

To one whose footsteps fall
Upon a mountain's height,
Earth must seem very small,
And heaven infinite.

Then why do misty tears
Conceal each lofty crest,
If earth so far appears,
So near the land of rest?

Hush! for the mists withdraw,
The Hidden shines in bliss;
Who in a valley saw
A heaven-light like this?

I think when earth can speak
(She will one of these days),
That every mountain-peak
Will give a shout of praise.

I did not care for the song that I sang;
I was not thinking of mountains at all;
Tiresome and strange in mine ears the words rang—
'Heaven is infinite, earth is so small'—

Rang in that eerie monotonous way
Words sometimes will, when *we* don't will one bit.
Which proves they're alive—It is hard in the day,
But in the night *who* can battle with it?
And a little sob rose up in my throat—
'Harry, Harry, Harry,' thrill'd through the sob;
I touch'd the guitar, and its answering note
Came unexpected, and made my heart throb.

Song.

It was once upon a time,
Ere the roses bud and blow,
Underneath the scented lime,
Long ago, ah, long ago!
Is it I that was so fair,
When the sun is slanting low,
With a lily in my hair,
Ah, so very long ago?

Was my heart as light as this
Was the lily white as snow?
What a happy hour it is,
Long ago, ah, long ago?
Then the lily bloom'd to save,
Ere a tear had learn'd to flow
Now it lies upon a grave,
Ah, so very long ago!

While I sat singing, steps came on the path,
Outside the window—what marvel is this?
Steady and solemn, they make my heart wrath,
Steps come towards me, and they are not his!
Steps in the night time pass up to my door;
Then comes a knocking might waken the dead:
Instead of one Harry there must be four,
Only not one has his light springy tread.

My old nurse's son to sea ran away—
At a 'Norwester,' or gale from the South,
I've heard the poor woman tremblingly say
The sound 'brought her heart up into her mouth!'

I, little prattler, crouched down at her feet,
Would stop aghast in my innocent play,
Wondering, will she be able to eat,
Supposing her heart in her mouth shall *stay?*

Strange are our minds and their workings, I'm sure
Studying them might drive Solomon wild:
At the loud knocking, I ran to the door,
With a sudden thought of that nurse and child.

I saw her rocking herself in her chair,
While the mad wind blew 'neath the stormy sky;
I saw the little child watching her there,
And knew, with a pang, that the child was I.

(Strange are the pangs, that, when life is most fair,
With not a regret to shadow the scene,
Seize on the heart with a sudden despair
From a passing mem'ry of what *has been.*

And while to the door I ran with a start,
Frighten'd to death at the knocking without,
I was thinking of my old nurse's heart,
And *not* of what all the noise was about!

Four men without peering sharply within;
One girl within looking out at the men;
Silence at first—you might have heard a pin
Drop on the doorsteps—silence—and then,

'What do you want?' cried the girl. She spoke loud,
In a voice that sounded unlike her own.
'We want Mr. Vane,' said a man, who bowed,
And uttered the words in a gentle tone.

They were very well dressed—they were not poor—
They had shining hats and cloaks wrapp'd about,
These men who stood at the happy hall-door,
Where Harry and I run in and run out.

(You want him? *I* want him, I might have said:
But only to say so seem'd like a sin):
'He is not within'; and I shook my head,
And while I yet spoke *the men were* within.

They did not appear to wish to intrude;
They did not attempt to frighten me now;
They did not push by me; they were not rude;—
But *somehow* they enter'd—I know not how.

'It's no use trying to 'ide 'im, my dear,
Said one, in a really fatherly way;
'In course we knows that the gen'leman's 'ere;
And till he turns up we shall 'ave to stay.'

'The gentleman's here?' but no one has come;
And no one *can* come—it is much too late.
Mr. Vane is out—he will soon be home;
But I really must ask you not to wait.'

The man laid a finger against his nose;
With a horrible slyness look'd at me:
'We understands all that 'ere, I suppose;
But you'd *better* come to terms,' said he.

I stared at the man with my vacant eyes,
That dreamily question'd him, how he dared?
And suddenly saw, with extreme surprise,
It was a policeman at whom I stared.

The five of us stood in the pleasant hall;
And four were policemen, and one was I;
And Harry had never come home at all;
And the clock struck one with a gasping sigh.

My heart grew cold, and my courage ran down;
I pinch'd my finger—I tried *not* to scream—
I felt like a creature about to drown,
And I cried aloud 'It MUST be a dream!'
I angrily spoke,—and I spoke out loud;
I *knew* 'twas a dream and nothing in it;
I spurn'd the dream with a gesture proud,
And ORDERED myself to wake that minute.

Of course, I just fell asleep where I sat,
And this is a dream—yes I know it is—
But O it is stranger than dreaming, that
Harry has not waken'd me with a kiss!

I looked at the men, who are searching round,
And taking a note of all they can find;
Examining ceiling and walls and ground,—
—I am surely going out of my mind!

I said to myself in a coaxing way—
'I am wide awake, and he *has* come back;
Harry is acting a sort of a play:
He has dress'd himself up, and so has Jack.'

A glance or a signal dispers'd the men:
Two went upstairs, and another below;
The leader sat down in the hall; and then—
What am *I* to do? Where am *I* to go?

I rush'd to the door, and I flung it wide—
A frighten'd creature can anything dare—
And I saw the darkness that lay outside,
And I heard the silence—and nothing was there.

'Harry! Harry! Harry!' was all my cry,
As I stood alone at the open door;
And the night heard me—and so did the sky,
And the wind and the earth—and nothing more.

I turn'd from the door with a sad surprise:
I could call for my love and call in vain;
And I met that horrid policeman's eyes,
Keenly and quietly watching my pain.

He suddenly called for his men to come;
So they made their appearance one by one;
And he said, 'The gen'leman's *not* been 'ome,
And she 'asn't a notion what he's done.

And he *won't* come now, you may swear to that;
I rayther think he'll look arter a ship:
I rayther suspect we've been rayther flat,
And the gen'leman's given us the slip!'

With a regular march they trod the ground,
Suddenly left me alone in the hall;
In the dreadful silence that settled round,
Again I *knew* I was dreaming it all?

A voice that can banish my sleep I know;
I know a voice that could wake me if dead;
A loud cheery voice, but it might speak low,
And 'May, little May,' it whispering said.

I stand like a statue of silence. Hush!
I listen not with my ears, but my soul;
And I feel the sudden accustom'd blush,
As again the whisper reaches its goal.

I open the window. 'Mid blossom and bough
Of clustering laurel and Daphne white,
I am showering kisses on Harry's brow,
And dropping the first tears I've shed to-night.

His face is as white as the Daphne-bud;
He is hiding down on the hidden sward;
He is wan and haggard, and splashed with mud;
He is crouching frighten'd—my king and lord!

He whisper'd, and fill'd my heart with dismay,—
Scared by the sounds that used once to rejoice!—
O Harry, my Harry, speak loudly, I pray,
And *not* in that shocking whispering voice.

He whisper'd, 'I've got in a horrid scrape;
Fetch me some money, and bid me good-bye;
I must run away, and make my escape,'—
'I shall run with you, my darling,' said I.

'You cannot,' he murmur'd;—a speechless love
Shone out of his eyes; he return'd my kiss—
'I never intended—Great Father above,
You *know* that I never intended this.

Fetch me some money—the desk and the key—
You know them—be quick! or dearly you'll rue—
My life's in your hands!—have mercy on me—
Fetch me some money—It's all you can do.'

A horrible haste in manner and voice,
A desperate hungry imploring haste;
I rush'd up the stairs—I had not a choice,
And I snatch'd the notes from where they were plac'd.
All that I had—to the window I rush'd—
With kisses and tears in his hands I laid;
He return'd the kisses, with lips that crush'd
Their vehement kisses on lips dismay'd.

He was almost gone; but I held him tight,
And cried in my anguish, 'You have forgot—
When shall I follow you, darling? to-night?'
He shook his head, and he answer'd me not!

He threw off my hands in a savage way;
He cried, 'I adore you,' in fondest tone;
'You *shall* follow me, sweet—I dare not stay—
I'll write to you, darling;' and he is gone!

PART III.

O the weary, dark, impossible days,
That have dragg'd their lingering length since then!
O the cruel sunshine's merciless blaze!
O the unnatural faces of men!

I was told it all—it was all explain'd;
And they all declar'd that I understood;
But only one knowledge on earth remain'd,
I knew that Harry was noble and good.

They had dined together—together play'd,
Together quarrell'd—who cares about what?
And somebody, speaking about them, said,
'They were out and out a thorough bad lot!'

'They left the village, they rush'd to the cliff,
A dissolute crew that good Christians condemn'—
This is the way they keep talking, as if
I did not know *Harry* was one of them!
'Shouting and swearing, and heated and flush'd,
All talking together, and running pell mell,
Out to the cliff from the village they rush'd,
And two men were fighting, and one man fell.'
And the man who fell over the dreadful edge,
For ever lost, and for ever must be;
There was never a sandbank, rock, or ledge,
There was *nothing* but the pitiless sea!

I hear it said, without doubt or surmise,
Over and over and over again,
The man who was murder'd was Jack Devize,
And the man who murder'd him, Harry Vane!

I dream I am standing on purple heights,
Alone and alone for ever and aye;
The sun is shining with pitiless lights;
I pray that darkness may cover the sky.

I dream I am lying buried in sand,
Alone and alone for ever and aye;
Parch'd and dry is the terrible land;
I pray but for water before I die.

I dream I am tossing on ocean waves,
Alone and alone for ever and aye;
I shudder to think of the open graves;
Under daisy blossoms I pray to lie.

O daisy buds I am dreaming of *you*,
Alone and alone for ever and aye;
From a dream of daisies scatter'd with dew
I wake with a start and a piercing cry.

Let me but dream of affliction and shame,
Of saints that punish and sinners that cower,
Of troubles by sickness and sword and flame,
And *not* of an innocent daisy flower!

I am haunted by words—by seven words—
Seven words echoing everywhere;
They are borne on breezes, and sung by birds,
They are written on earth and sea and air.

I think there is nothing else is my own;
I think there is nothing else is alive;
Seven words and I are always alone;
The world about me may hunger and strive.

I have heard that mystic meaning is hid,
I have heard that wonderful things are made,
Of the number seven—may God forbid—
For I cannot tell, and I feel afraid.

The sweetest poem that ever was writ—
Do you not know it?—is 'We are seven;'
For the dear little girl who talks in it,
Will not give up her brothers in Heaven.

What the stupid sense of the grown-up man
Urges, she cannot perceive; but prefers
The simple faith of her own sweet plan,
And the brothers in Heaven still are hers.

The very last day that Harry was here
I read him those verses, and Harry smil'd;
And we held some converse, divinely dear,
Which was all about that dear little child.

Is it for this that I think of it now?
Is it for this he let seven words fall?
O pulses are beating behind my brow,
And I think my heart is not beating at all!
And my brain, it keeps whirling round and round,
Like a sing-song wheel through a ship at night;
And the seven words that constantly sound
Are 'you shall follow me, sweet,' and 'I'll write.'

I wonder if I have been going mad,
In the strange wild world I am living in?
I think that I have—I hop'd that I had—
For I weary with wondering, what is sin?

There's blood on your hand—there's blood on your soul—
O lily-white hand—soul noble and true!
You murder'd him where the blue waters roll,
And he set the seal of his death on you.

I have sat so happily by your side,
I have lain so tranquilly on your breast;
But I think that you died, and I think that I died—
And death is the end of all, and the best.

It was God who created men and time;
And a better than you He could not need;
So if you did it, it was not a crime,
And if 'twas a crime, you did not the deed.

I am fighting with life, with death I strive;
Ready for neither; both crush with their might
Only those seven words keep me alive—
You said 'you shall follow me,' and 'I'll write.'

They stealthily talk; I hear what they say—
Sharply she hears who each syllable dreads—
Glancing at me in significant way,
Touching their foreheads and shaking their heads.

'Mad?'—'not exactly—bewilder'd—confus'd;
Thoughts turn'd astray by grief's terrible force;
Not even by love is murder excus'd;
She cannot believe that he did it, of course.
She thinks him a hero, and so loves on;
Reason enthron'd would annihilate this;
Love would have nothing to nestle upon,
Did she perceive him the sinner he is.'

Words striking my brain like sunshine on ice,
Bursting the bulwarks that kept the flood in;
Is love only madness? Will reason suffice
To crucify love at the presence of sin?

Reason comes back with all honours she had,
Calmly accepting my life as it is;
I will not go mad—I dare not go mad—
I must *prove* love is not treason like this!

Is he not all that I thought him? Be still
O treacherous heart—then *you* were to blame:
I married my Harry for good or ill
And through good and ill I love him the same.

If God died for us, and lay in a grave,
Leaving His mansions of glory for this;
It must have been from a longing to save
Such a noble sinner as Harry is.

In His own image created He him,
And He called man 'good' on the virgin sod;
And when He beheld His image grow dim,
He died to redeem it—the gracious God!

Rebuking myself with an angry pain—
What was I wishing for? What would I have?
A paragon fram'd by my shallow brain,
And not the sinner God died to save?

I have *driven* madness out of my brain,
Studying life with intolerant eyes;
Praying and weeping and praying again—
Earth is good for nothing but prayers and sighs.

We all are made up of follies and faults,
That, if time but serv'd, would lead us to crime;
And for every time my darling halts,
I am sure I have halted fifty times!

I am not blinded or prejudiced here;
I have sought the truth and found what I sought;
I know you were wrong, my Harry, my dear;
You should not have play'd and quarrell'd and fought.

Had you been *here* on that evening—a cry
Comes out of my heart as *one* grace I implore:
Let me not think of our evenings, or I
Shall suddenly die, and see him no more.

I know you were wrong, my darling; I know
That we all do wrong, and must all repent;
But this horrible depth of nameless woe
Was nothing on earth but an accident.
With your tender heart and your gracious way,
And your temper as gay as cloudless skies,
You would sooner have died that fatal day
Than taken the life of Jack Devize.

O tender heart, art thou lonely and cold,
With no one to comfort or take thy part?
O sweet gay words in the days that are old!
nd oh, to be clasp'd to that tender heart!

I am so afraid that you feel remorse
For an end that *indeed* you could not prevent;
And I am not there to put gentle force
On what you should and should *not* repent.
I am so afraid that you grieve *too* much,
With a sorrow that nothing will stop or stay:
O Harry, don't *let* your sorrow be such;
O darling, you *shall* be happy some day!

They want to have you; they hunt you to death:
They *cannot* believe that you *meant* the deed!
Have they no sense? no perception? no faith?
Are they helmless boats, without God or Creed?

Waiting, waiting, waiting, Harry, for you,
While the dreadful days drag wearily by;
I cannot wait longer—what shall I do?
For till I have kiss'd you I cannot die.

Frighten'd at every movement or sound—
Every thing except one thing forgot—
Always in terror that you have been found—
Would the *first moment* be rapture or not?

Wandering aimlessly everywhere,
Upstairs and downstairs, from room into room,
Searching for nothing—for nothing is there,
Only the changeless impregnable gloom.

Stifled within, the cool gardens I seek;—
Like poor human souls the flowers all die;
Even the birds are refusing to speak,
Crush'd by the weight of a leaden-gray sky.

Is this the whole of it? is this the end?
Life finish'd off by a heartless Amen?
When will you write to me? when will you send?
When shall I follow you, Harry?—Ah when?

I wander'd far from my hateful abode;
The hour was becoming a little late;
Just there a gate open'd into a road,
And a boy was leaning upon the gate.

Faithful old Rover, who follow'd me out,
Went perfectly frantic beholding this boy,
Sniff'd at his coat, leaping wildly about,
And danced like a dog that dances for joy.

He was a stripling both slender and tall
(My idle eyes vacantly take the view),
His coat was too large, or he was too small,
His nose was a snub, and his eyes were blue.
Angry I felt to see Rover rejoice,
But he suddenly stopp'd, began to quake,
And howl'd in a most deplorable voice,
As if his dog-heart was ready to break.

Then the boy, stooping down, *something* slipp'd in
(The something was little and square and white)
Between the steel collar and hairy skin,
Saw that I saw it, and so took to flight.

Wagging his tail, a hurrah in each beat,
Expanding his chest with a gesture grand,
Rover ran back to crouch down at my feet,
Licking my eager incredulous hand.

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It was in my hands—I tore it apart,
This letter that Harry had writ to me;
My head turn'd giddy, and so did my heart,
And turn'd my eyes blind that I could not see.

O wicked blind eyes, will you *not* be clear?
Have I not *told* you 'tis written by him?
'Tis a piece of Heaven I am holding here,
And my horrible earthly eyes are dim!

The cruel letters run out and run in,
Fluttering, tottering, stammering by,
Mixing together like threads that you spin,
Flying apart, as birds recklessly fly.

Is it for years that I helplessly stand,
While tremulous lights into shadows flit,
With a piece of Heaven held in my hand,
Which is mine—and I cannot enter it!

At last—O my wonderful dear at last!
Thou always comest, howe'er it is—
The senseless signs into symmetry pass'd,
For a few short seconds it *must* be bliss!

And so standing there in the twilight's fall
(What happen'd is nothing but what must be)
I read the first words that ever at all
My Harry (God bless him!) has written me.

HARRY'S LETTER.

'O. Child, when my words your sweet youth beguil'd,
I *meant* to make you the happiest child!
I *meant* that no earthly life should be known
As bless'd as the life I had made my own;
My weakness and follies I had forgot—
But you *were* happy with me, were you not?

I am not worthy my Love should come,
Forsaking for my sake her English home;
Exiled from all that is happy and good,
Caress'd by a hand that is stain'd with blood.
Your innocent face shall never be kiss'd
By him who his Heaven and Hope has miss'd!
I suffer for sin, as I ought to do;
But, my darling, it shall not fall on you.

'I am safely hous'd by a faithful friend,
And the letter I write his hands will send;
I'm at Clarendon Crescent, Liverpool
(I've told you, Love, of the dear old school);
Clarence will help me all ways that he can
(*Though* a good tutor, he is a good man).
I shall sail for another hemisphere,
Leaving behind me my anguish and fear;
Leaving behind me my joy and my grace,
I shall soon pass over limitless space.

'Could I *but* have seen you but once again!
It is hard to suffer and not complain!
'Tis my sin against *you* I most repent
(I *did* make you happy? you *were* content?)

'O fool, who possessing all man may win,
Could not keep his fool-nature free from sin!
Love must have changed to a useless regret;
You cannot forgive me—can you forget?'

Without an hour's or a minute's delay
All is arranged, I decide what to do;
My brain is at work, my heart is at play,
I am running, flying, Harry, to you.

O stricken woman, whose life is all black,
Wearily walking in sorrow and shame!
O gay little girl who comes running back,
You are not, I'm certain, one and the same!

The sky is hid in its lead-coloured pall,
Not a bird utters the least little tone;
The blossoms about me wither and fall,
The change *must* be in *me*—and me alone

I tell them I cannot endure it more;
That the empty house is killing my heart;
They have done their best to assist before;
And they eagerly help me to depart.
The world is very good-natured, I find
(Why do worldlings often their home condemn?)
And servants are always extremely kind,
If mistresses only are kind to them.
'I go to London to meet a friend'—
They are all agreed I want change and rest—
I give a direction where they may send,
I take my own maid, and I leave the rest

I know that detectives are on my track,
Watching the house—watching all that I do—
I have to pretend I am coming back,
And enact this drama, Harry, for you.

I am sorry to say goodbye to all—
For all had been kind in days that are dead;
But the only tear that my eyes let fall
Was dropp'd upon Rover's shaggy old head.

My London friend I can trust; she is one
That I knew at school, and have lov'd for years—
O happy school-days that are past and done!
O beautiful friendship, unsoiled by tears!

Restlessly, wearily eager am I—
(Do girls feel thus when about to elope?)—
I leave Harry's home 'neath a star-lit sky,
And my heart beats high with a single hope

And my heart beats high with a single hope,
Which has come on a sudden when unsought;
In all the wide world there is only scope
For a single hope and a single thought.
O why should a wide world have more than this?
When after all has been done and been said
'Tis a single grief or a single bliss
That rekindles a life or strikes it dead.

Clasp'd in her arms, with her tears on my cheek,
Her kind husband warmly grasping my hand,
In statue-like calm, I move not nor speak—
A silent machine for one purpose plann'd.

'O white little face,' she tremblingly cries,
'It cannot be yours, that white little face;
O when did you get those far-seeking eyes?
And the stillness in lieu of girlish grace?'

And looking at me she drew back alarm'd,
She felt that *something* divided us;
She, who lived the life of the happy charm'd,
And I, who am battling with fortune thus.

Out spake her husband—'I know what to do;
Put her to bed—she will wake by-and-by—
Then let her have, in the boudoir with you,
A hot cup of tea and thorough good cry.'

As a judge in court he summ'd up the whole;
I laugh'd my first laugh since the grief began;
For I thought, this is how a woman's soul
Is held at the hands of a worthy man!

I answer'd him with a sort of a scorn—
The least little bend from a haughty heigh.
'I left home last evening, was here at morn,
And shall be in Liverpool long ere night.'

They were startled, eager, anxious and kind
(They had read the papers and learn'd the fact),
But they question'd not, from the touch refin'd
Of a sweet good-nature that men call tact.

I told where he was—I trusted them both,
Sounding the depths of their souls in their eyes;
The man was too honest to need an oath,
And the woman too tender not to be wise.

They were ready to help with hand and heart
(And a kindness no balancing prudence bounds),
Fed me and petted me, let me depart,
And lent me at parting five hundred pounds.
We started as if for an airing gay,
No coachman or footman, not even Jane;
The husband drove us the whole of the way,
And saw me safe in the Liverpool train.
The tears of my friend lie wet on my cheek,
I pointed onward, and wistfully smil'd;
Her husband smil'd too, though he did not speak,
And kiss'd me as if I had been his child.

Never a slumber the whole of the night,
Never a slumber with day in the skies;
Nature assumes preternatural light,
Set in sharp outlines that dazzle my eyes.

Blackness and whiteness—no colour there is—
Terrible contrast of lustre and shade—
Yet no surprise thrills my spirit at this
Wonderful world into silhouettes made.

Countries and cities rush hastily by,
Hedgerows and forests excitedly fly;
Rapidly earth pirouettes through the sky;
All things are madly in motion, but I—

If they would stop for one minute, but one,
Thought might return from spheres distant and dim;
Thought has forsaken me; I am alone,
With but one consciousness—nothing but *him*.

We have reach'd the station—the train is left:
What I am doing I know must be done;
I am a creature whose body's bereft
Of all sensations and feelings save one.

I don't think I *see* the streets and the lights,
Or *hear* the answers my questions brought;
Yet *something* guides me, and guides me aright—
Is mesmerism the nonsense I thought?
If the brain, engross'd by a single fact,
Fails the whole army of nerves to sustain,
The outposts perhaps, refusing to act,
Transmit neither sight nor sound to the brain.

But are souls dependent on eye and ear?
Does *nothing* come straight to them from above?
Are there no spirit-instincts, to see and hear,
And *no* miraculous power of Love?

I have found the Crescent, and number Two—
I have rung the bell—the servant has come—
I have opened my lips, and words run through,
And they ask 'Is Mr. Clarence at home?'
A man has appear'd from some inner place
(I heard him describ'd 'ere this trance began)—
Is he moving away into empty space?
I must come to life and must stop this man.

A terrible nightmare on throat and brain—
A body and soul in bewilder'd strife—
Shall I never be quite alive again?—
I'll make a desperate struggle for life!

I catch at his arm as he passes by,
As a drowning creature clutches at life;
And I whisper low as a lullaby—
'Give him me *instantly*—I am his wife!'

He stares in my face with nothing to say—
A tremor comes over his brow and lip—
He flings up his arms in a helpless way,
And stammers—'Alas! he 's on board the ship!'

I am not fainting—I am not appall'd—
I am not beat down—I feel no despair:
It seems all expected and all forestall'd,
As I utter my three words, 'When and where?'

'Two hours ago at the Northern quay'—
He offers me food, and to rest and sit—
I have left the house—I am on my way—
I have hail'd a cab and jump'd into it.

O faster! O faster! O yet more fast!
There's nothing on earth but driving like this:
I *know* it will all come right at the last,
But I am not certain what the right is.

There is a river and there is a boat
(I read it all in a far-away tale)—
O faster! O faster! you do but float;
Pull away with your oars, shake out your sail!

A woman, I know, must sail in a skiff,
And reach a ship ere it reaches the sea;
But it *is* a wonderful matter if
The woman who sits here is really me!

O faster! O faster! you scarcely stir—
The ship has grown large that was but a speck!
We have reached the ship—we have boarded her—
And I SEE who is standing on her deck!

I see who stands there, I hear and see
His incredulous joy and startled cry,
His beautiful wonder at sight of me;
I feel his embraces, and then—I die!

PART IV.

I know not how long I was lying dead;
I know not what happen'd day after day:
But I know whose breast supported my head;
I know in whose arms I passively lay.

I know whose voice I was hearing again;
With no vivid emotion through me sent,
But only with that sweet absence of pain
The young call repose, and the old, content.

I know of the presence that o'er me shed
Through all that I suffer'd a perfect ease;
I know all this because I am dead—
I suppose the dead can know what they please!

Can I be dead? It is foolish to die,
Earth shining brighter than any bright star.
Death, do you *know* it is Harry and I?
Heaven is here—must I seek it afar?

Death, seize thy prey from the world-weary track;
Let not the happy by thee be remov'd;
Slowly and softly and sweetly come back,
Life that she loves to a girl that is lov'd!

Cut through the waves, happy ship 'neath my feet;
Scatter thy prow with beneficent spray!
Never an admiral leading a fleet
Felt as triumphant as I do to-day!

Ocean around us, and Heaven above;
Hands clasp'd together in innocent bliss;
Heart meeting heart with the fulness of love—
Can there be anything sweeter than this?

Seeking a home on a far-distant shore,
Mid gigantic forests and splendid flow'rs,
Where sorrow cannot bewilder us more,
Or fear reach a solitude perfect as ours.

Crossing blue oceans 'neath heavens as blue,
Seeking new worlds with new winters and springs;
Even the old stars are changing to new,
Lovely confusion of wonderful things!

Almost forgetting to feel a regret—
Almost forgotten the world whence we came—
Only our hearts, Harry, cannot forget;
Only our love will be ever the same!

Talking together through nights and through days;
Talking together through days and through nights;
Facing futurity's fathomless haze;
Piercing its shadows with delicate lights.

Forward our glances immutably cast
(Pillars of salt will not garnish our way!)
Just for the present forgetting the past,
Planning the future in all that we say.

Where neither sorrow nor sin has beguil'd,
Deep in a forest, a home will be made;
Nature contrasting with hand undefil'd
Novel creations of sunlight and shade.

Softness and grandeur enchantingly blent,
Deep in a forest two lives pass away;
Wrapp'd in each other, supremely content,
Lighted by love's irrefrangible ray.

So the ship flew on that contain'd us two,
With ocean around and heaven above;
It seem'd there was nothing for us to do
But to love and live, and to live and love.

So the ship flew on to the sinless shore,
Where a younger world from the deep sea starts;
Where sorrow cannot bewilder us more,
Or fear lay her cold hand over our hearts.

It is just as lovely as what we plann'd,
With its exquisite air of bright repose;
And 'tis Harry himself must till the land,
And 'tis I must sweep and cook, I suppose!

Is it playing at life, this life of ours?
Has childhood come back with its pleasant plays?
Mid gigantic trees and delicious flow'rs
We are passing our happy nights and days.

But the little cloud—O the little cloud—
So little at first it might almost please—
That covers us up like a dead man's shroud,
Growing bigger and bigger by degrees.

Alas! is it only in some bright past
That love can be perfect and bliss secure?
O days of delight that flew by too fast,
Leaving the present too empty and poor!

I had sometimes fancied a pang like this,
From a passing tone, or a look in his face;
But the meeting was such unclouded bliss,
And the days that follow'd it full of grace.

In the sweet content of finding a home,
There was not leisure for joy to grow dim;
But the cloud was there, and ready to come,
And the cloud was the fear of change in *him*!

Harry is changed—he is graver,—I think
Never I'll see the old Harry again:
There's a look in his face that makes my heart sink,
For it is a look of a hopeless pain.

Sometimes I hardly can keep down my cries—
I could wring my hands—I could tear my hair—
When an expression comes into his eyes,
Which is the expression of a despair.

He never alludes to the dreadful past;
But when his lips tremble and brow is knit,
I cannot bear it, and cry out at last,
O talk of it, Harry—O talk of *it*!'

His eyes are full of a helpless regret
(And I almost wish I was lying dead);
Will he not talk of it? not even yet?—
He speaks in a whisper, and shakes his head.

'I cannot—I dare not.' 'You can—you dare—
You must do it, Harry—just for my sake;
For this burthen, which it is *not* to bear,
Is crushing my heart, and my heart will break.'

He kisses my lips—he presses my hand—
Looking straight in my face without surprise;
But it seems that he *cannot* understand,
And very wide of the mark he replies—

'I will not shadow that innocent heart
With the lightest cloud that may dim its light.'
'But my life in your life must take its part,
Or I am lost in the darkness of night.'

I married you, Harry, for good or ill,
For better or worse, for sickness or health.
O let me the beautiful vow fulfil,
Joyously, utterly—never by stealth!
I am *not* your wife while you treat me thus,
And life is becoming too hard to bear;
Is there that in the heart of one of *us*,
That the heart of the other must not share?

'I almost died when you left me, my dear;
Yet you did it quite for my good, you know;
O where should I be if I was not here?
'Neath a little grass hillock lying low!
You would be living, to labour and strive,
And I should be lying quite dead—quite dead!
You would be thinking of me as alive,
While daisies were growing over my head.

And now—for my good—will you crush my life
With a burthen it cannot bear, I *know*?
O Harry, my darling, I *am* your wife—
O what have I done that you treat me so?'

He stared in my eyes with a sort of frown,
That more than a smile gave promise of grace;
The mask that he wore fell suddenly down,
A wonderful change came over his face.

He sat at my feet, and his head he laid
Low down on my lap, and he did not move,
But he murmur'd softly, 'I am afraid
I shall make a fool of myself, my love.'

And then he suddenly burst into tears
(I had never seen tears in Harry's eyes),
And he cried, 'If I live a hundred years,
I shall see the wild face of Jack Devize!'

Then I felt the doom that was o'er us laid,
And our lives stood before me pale and gray;
My heart turn'd sick—I was feeling afraid—
As I kept kissing Harry's tears away.

And must his life be so faint and so dim?
And his heart be rack'd by a useless pain?
While I'm always trying to comfort him,
And always trying to comfort in vain?

Ah no, my beloved, it shall *not* be so,
I will try so hard—I will pray so much;
Comfort will come to you, Harry, I know,
And grief die out 'neath her delicate touch.
We must both be brave and must play our parts;
We must fight the battle with weapons fit;
Time will take sorrow out of our hearts,
But oh, the pity—the pity of it!

There are no more secrets 'twixt you and me;
Our hearts may reveal their thoughts as they pass;
There is a ripple the less on the sea,
And a purer light flits over the grass.

If shadows are dark, and lights are not clear,
It is only the common lot of man;
We must live our actual lives, my dear,
And make the best of those lives that we can.

I used to be certain of perfect bliss,
And find it in every breath I drew;
And now the height of my happiness is
To lessen the sorrow that burthens *you*!

Thank God that we met when our lives were bright,
And earth was as fair as heaven above,
And stood in the lovely religious light,
And vowed the sweet vows to cherish and love.

O Harry, my dear! if we had not met,
What would you do with your desolate life?
O merciful God, can I ever forget
Your goodness in *letting* me be his wife?

We walk 'neath the weight that we have to bear
(I suppose all people walk under weights);
They say that a road of trouble and care
Is the straightest road to the Heaven-gates.

I hope we shall find the gates open far,
So that close together we both come in;
I shrink from the thoughts of the gates ajar,
When only the one might an entrance win.

I wonder if Heaven is brighter yet,
Than the home that lies o'er a distant main;
I wonder if there we shall *quite* forget
That we never saw that dear home again!

I must not be tired, or think of my load;
I must try to walk with a step more free;
I have to help Harry along the road,
That is so much harder for him than me.

Living alone in the depths of a wood,
Life catches meanings, and things become clear;
But Harry is growing so very good,
That it almost gives me a sort of fear.

'O little May-blossom!' he softly cries,
As together we tread the well-worn way,
'There is nothing sweeter beneath the skies,
Than a little shining blossom of May!

O lie on my heart, as you ever do,
Till my heart grows lighter under your touch;
O little May-blossom! while I have *you*
No shaft of misfortune can hurt me much!'

He has work'd all day on the virgin sod;
We have eaten the meal that my hands prepare;
We have said our prayers to the Father-God,
And Harry is placidly sleeping there.

He is sleeping there, while I work away—
My busy needle has plenty to do;
And my thoughts turn idly to yesterday,
And a world where troubles were very few;

To a world that shines in a distance fair,
Like a fairy dream, impossibly sweet,—
Was life what it seem'd when we liv'd out there?
Or was it only a lovely deceit?

Slumber approach'd not my eyes—open'd wide—
My wide-open eyes that so seldom weep!
Harry turn'd in his sleep, and turning sigh'd—
It breaks my heart when he sighs in his sleep.

And while I sat there in the twilight-gloom,
Looking at life with my wide-open eyes,
A ghost slipp'd suddenly into the room,
And that ghost was the ghost of Jack Devize!

A shiver ran o'er me from head to foot—
The crisis had come, and fate wrought her worst—
I tried to speak, but my tongue was quite mute,
And I knew that a ghost could *not* speak first.

O ought I to wake my Harry, or no?
To question the Thing, and let it depart?
The good God would never frighten me so,
If it was not to ease my Harry's heart.

But while I was doubting in fear and pain,
And praying for light to see my way clear,
The ghost said—'My goodness! it's Mrs. Vane!
How in the world did the woman come here?'

The ghost stalk'd towards me with outstretch'd hand:
I put mine behind me, and back'd away;
My terrified brain could not understand,
And my arid lips had nothing to say.

Yet for Harry's sake no time must be lost:
I must ask the dreadful Thing why it came;
Then I remember'd 'twas he kill'd the ghost,
And I hung down my head and blush'd for shame.

Suddenly turning, my Harry it saw;
Suddenly sprang t'wards the couch where he lay;—
A deadlier terror conquering awe,
Brave as a lion, I stood in its way.

I wav'd both my hands to signal it back:
'You shall not come near him!' I wildly said;
'He never intended to kill you, Jack—
O Jack, I *hope* you don't mind being dead!'

Strive as we will, fate can calmly defeat—
What *is* to be, happens—and always will;
Harry awoke, and stood up on his feet,
And my heart leapt madly and then stood still.

I trembled for Harry, all unprepar'd!
I stood between the Alive and the Dead!
The man and the ghost at each other star'd—
And the man got white, and the ghost got red.

The man kept on staring with hungry eyes,
Pointing at it, till I trembled to see;
Then said in a whisper, 'It 's Jack Devize!'—
Shook himself wildly and turn'd upon *me*.

His hand sought his brow in a weak sad way,
A pitiful look came into his face:
'It is a brain-phantom,' I heard him say,
'Which my weary brain engenders in space!'

'No, Harry,' I whisper'd, 'it is not so;
I wish that it was—from my heart I do'
I held him tight, whispering very low,
'Tis a real ghost, for—I see it too!'

I felt his arm quiver under my clasp;
He started backwards with such a great start;
He flung up his arms, and cried with a gasp,
'Oh speak to me, Jack, whatever thou art!'

The ghost caught his hands with a cheer almost,
And shook them right manfully where it stood,
Shouting 'I'm neither a phantom nor ghost;
I am Jack Devize, and am flesh and blood!'

And so the sorrow was only a dream
(As the sun uprises the dream departs);
And the false false sorrow did only seem,
And the true true joy came into our hearts.

I had so determin'd to be resign'd,
And to school myself to a patient mood,
That I felt a little ill-used to find
There was no occasion for being good.

But oh the joy, like the sweetest surprise,
With a light light heart and nothing to bear!
And oh to be looking in Harry's eyes
And never a fear of what I see there!

And when earth is deck'd in eternal spring,
Singing we go on a flowery way;
And happiness *is* such a happy thing,
And it seems so natural to be gay

I think that the dullest will understand
Jack was not drown'd when he fell from the height;
A ship passing by, as if it was plann'd,
Carried him off mid the darkness of night.
He was up to the neck in debts and scrapes;
And when the west wind refreshingly blew,
He thought it the pleasantest of escapes
To sail for new worlds with nothing to do.
Strolling and idling by day and by night,
He liv'd by his wits, with a laugh for fate;
And his wits not being extremely bright,
He accomplish'd nothing remarkably great.

Wandering ev'rywhere, ragged and poor,
With nothing to do and plenty to say,
By the merest chance he enter'd our door
To ask for a meal and a bed by the way.

So the three of us met delighted there,
And set sail together that perfect spring,
When the skies were fine and the winds were fair,
And our hearts were lighter than anything.

From the midst of the sea the white cliffs rise—
The snowy white cliffs of the ocean gem!
And they smile their welcome into our eyes
As Harry and I smile it back on them.

Standing together alone on the deck,
With a hope that almost becomes a fear,
We can watch that wonderful little speck
Grow into places unspeakably dear.

Is it years or days since we sail'd away?
And are we returning the self-same track?
Did we cross the ocean but yesterday?
And is it to-day we are coming back?

Back to the home whence he vanish'd that night,
In through the hall where I talk'd with the men,—
Can it be true that our hearts are so light?
When did we dream? Is it now? Was it then?

And oh! to stand on the well-known road
In the bright uncertain English weather;
And oh! the hearts that are free from a load,
And oh! the hands that are knit together!

And oh! to see Rover leap to his side
With a yell as if he doubted his sight!
I thought the old dog would have really died
In his vehement agony of delight

And I know the present is *not* a dream,
For I feel a touch and a well-known kiss;
And they are not phantoms that shine and gleam
From days that are past with a solemn bliss.

From days that are lit by a heaven-ray,
To kindle our hearts and strengthen our faith;
For Harry and I are changed in a way,
Like people whose eyes have looked upon death.

My Harry has won such a patient mood,
And has grown so resolute and so wise;
He is always trying to do some good,
And always succeeding in what he tries.

The trials I trembled that he should bear,
His noble heart has accepted as such;
And I see they were sent with a tender care,
And never intended to be too much.

[1] For she had look'd upon a great man's death
And she was changed.

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My heart is too full of its joy, I fear,
When he whispers in fond caressing tone—
'It was not my trials that won me, dear;
It was watching my darling bear her own.'

Afar from the hut in the dusky wood,
We sometimes recall with a yearning sigh,
The days of our sorrowful solitude,
When the world was nothing but he and I.

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